

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-02 USIA-15 SP-02 AID-05 HA-05 /050 W

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P R 171325Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY BANJUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5192

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

UNCLAS BANJUL 0254

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PDIP GA NI

SUBJ: LT. GEN. OBASANJO ARRIVES IN BANJUL FOR INDEPENDENCE  
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

1. NIGERIA'S HEAD OF STATE, LT. GEN. OLUSEGUN OBASANJO ARRIVED IN BANJUL FEB 17 TO BEGIN TWO DAY STATE VISIT AS GUEST OF HONOR AT CELEBRATIONS MARKING 13TH ANNIVERSARY GAMBIAN INDEPENDENCE. NIGERIAN WAS FETED BY WARM, NOISY WELCOME FRIDAY MORNING IN MACCARTHY SQUARE, TRADITIONAL SITE IN BANJUL FOR MAJOR PUBLIC GATHERINGS.

2. DURING WELCOMING SPEECH, PRESIDENT JAWARA LAUDED REGIONAL INTEGRATION, CITING ECOWAS AS "IMPORTANT LANDMARK." HE SAID WHILE ECOWAS WILL NOT SOLVE ALL REGIONAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, ITS MEMBERS "CAN SUCCEED IN MAKING IT STRONG," BECAUSE "CONSCIOUSNESS" OF ITS IMPORTANCE IS FIRMLY PLANTED IN PEOPLES' MINDS. PRAISING NIGERIA'S DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS, SIR DAWDA ALLUDED TO HORN OF AFRICA IN CALLING FOR AFRICAN SOLUTIONS TO AFRICAN PROBLEMS. GAMBIAN PRESIDENT ALSO MADE STRONG APPEAL FOR "DEFENSE OF FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS."

3. GEN. OBASANJO'S INFORMAL RESPONSE PRAISED SPONTANEITY OF GAMBIAN WELCOME AS "EXPRESSION OF LOVE, BROTHERHOOD, AND  
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UNDERSTANDING." "IT COULD JOLLY WELL HAVE BEEN IN ANY CITY OF NIGERIA," HE ASSERTED IN CITING CROWDS, DRUMMINGS, AND POPULAR MANIFESTATION. GENERAL CLOSED BY CONFIRMING NEED FOR CONSOLIDATION OF UNITY AND PROGRESS IN WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION.

4. INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS THIS YEAR WILL BE PARTICULARLY CROWDED WITH MAJOR EVENTS. TRADITIONAL MARCH-PAST OF BANJUL PRI-

MARY SCHOOL CHILDREN WILL HIGHLIGHT INDEPENDENCE DAY MORNING, FEB 18. NEW BANJUL-BARRA FERRY SERVICE (ACROSS MOUTH OF GAMBIA RIVER), JUST CONSTRUCTED 6 STORY GAMBIA CENTRAL BANK BUILDING, AND BANJUL BREWERY WILL ALL BE INAUGURATED BY PRESIDENT JAWARA OVER NEXT FEW DAYS. FORMAL ENTERTAINMENT WILL INCLUDE STATE HOUSE RECEPTION FEB 17, AND STATE BANQUET FOLLOWING EVENING. PROGRAM INDICATES NIGERIAN-GAMBIAN JOINT COMMUNIQUE WILL BE SIGNED FEB 18, FOLLOWED BY PRESS CONFERENCE.

5. GENERAL OBSANJO IS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE BANJUL BY AIR AT 8 A.M. ON FEB 19. WYGANT

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, PDIP, OVIP, PDEV, GA, NI, (JAWARA, DAWDA KAIRABA), (OBASANJO, OLUSEGUN)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014